

Oakland Army Base, General Purpose
Administration Building (Building No. 90)
Chungking Street at Algiers Street
Oakland
Alameda County
California

HAER No. CA-125-G

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PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Engineering Record
National Park Service
Western Region
Department of the Interior
San Francisco, California 94107

HISTORIC AMERICAN ENGINEERING RECORD

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OAKLAND ARMY BASE, GENERAL PURPOSE ADMINISTRATION BUILDING
(Building No. 90)

HAER No. CA-125-G

Location: Chungking Street at Algiers Street
USGS Oakland West Quadrangle, Universal Transverse Mercator
Coordinates: Northing 4184900, Easting 560150

Date of Construction: September 1941

Architect: Bechtel-McCone-Parsons Corporation, Architect-Engineers, San Francisco, California.

Contractor: The prime contractor for this building was The Army Port Contractors, a joint venture of MacDonald & Kahn, Inc.; The Utah Construction Company; and W.A. Bechtel and Bechtel-McCone-Parsons Corporation. At least initially, some 600 black troops of the 394th Quartermaster Battalion helped in construction of the Installation. Additional subcontractors and suppliers consisted primarily of businesses in the San Francisco Bay area.

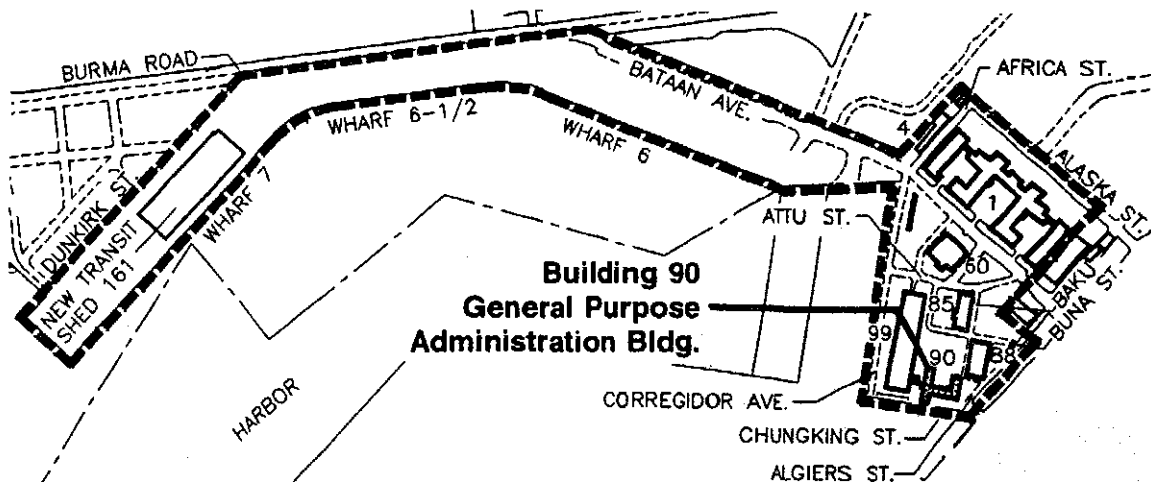
Present Owner and Occupant: Military Traffic Management Command, Western Area
Oakland Army Base, CA 94626-5000

Original Use: General Field Offices for administrative use

Present Use: General Purpose Administration

Significance: Building 90 was a structure used in support of Oakland Army Base's World War II mission.

Original Plans: Original plans were located in the OARB Engineering Office. According to the Real Property Record, the full set of As-Built's consisted of 11 drawings: #7052-174.0 through #7052-174.10, inclusive. One drawing from this series was unaccounted for:



#7052-174.9. Building 90 was identified as Building 32 in original construction documents.

Alterations: A semi-detached one story addition was added to the northwest wing of Building 90 in December 1941. This was subsequently removed. As-Builts indicate that a 24-foot extension in a northerly direction was planned for the east wing. It is not clear whether or not this addition was ever completed, but this extension does not exist today. Other than regular maintenance (e.g. repainting, reroofing, etc.) the building exterior appears substantially unchanged. The interior spaces have been significantly rearranged over time.

I. GENERAL STATEMENT

Architectural Character. Building 90 is typical of the one story temporary wood frame structures built for World War II utilitarian use.

Condition of Fabric. The building is in good condition.

II. DESCRIPTION OF THE EXTERIOR

Overall Dimensions. Building 90 consists of a main building and three wings. The main building is oriented along a roughly east-west line with dimensions of 146 feet by 32 feet. The wings have dimensions of 32 feet by 59 feet, 32 feet by 120 feet, and 4 feet by 39 feet. The total square footage of Building 90 is 10,556 (*Photograph CA-125-G-1*).

Foundations. The building is founded on 4 x 8 wood beams running the long way of the building structure and resting on concrete piers.

Walls. All exterior walls are wood stud framing with horizontal wood siding.

Structural System. The structural system is wood frame. The roof is framed by a sawtooth-type trussed rafter 2 feet on center.

Porches, Stoops, Balconies. Porches and platforms add 360 square feet onto Building 90. Most noteworthy of these is a 12' x 12' concrete walled vault attached to the west face of the west wing (*Photograph CA-125-G-2*).

Chimneys. None.

Openings. Building 90 was originally fenestrated with double-hung wood sash. Roughly half have been replaced with aluminum windows (*Photograph CA-125-G-3*); in some cases, protective metal screens have been added. At the time of construction, the main entrance to the building was on the south side of the arcade. Secondary entrances were positioned at the northern ends of the two wings, along with an exit on the north side of the arcade. Doors were all either single or double swinging wood. These have all been replaced. Entrances at the ends of the wings have been repositioned. The main entrance to the building has been moved from the south to the north side of the arcade, and a projecting enclosed porch has been added. Entrances have also been added on the south and east faces of the building.

Roof. The 3 in 12 pitch roof is surfaced with brown asphalt shingle roofing applied on wood decking.

III. DESCRIPTION OF THE INTERIOR

Floor Plans. Building 90 initially housed the field offices of the contractors. Six foot central corridors ran down the length of the east wing, connecting to a similar corridor in the arcade. Offices of varying sizes opened off these corridors. The west wing was primarily large, unpartitioned rooms extending the full width (36 feet) of the wing. Two small offices were centrally located along the west wall of the wing. A locked store room positioned between these offices served to control access to the concrete vault. All interior space has been remodeled.

Stairways. None.

Flooring. The original flooring was 1" tongue and groove applied directly over the joists (without subflooring).

Wall and Ceiling Finishes. The interior walls and ceilings were surfaced with cellulose fiber wallboard, then painted. The partitions surrounding the offices in the west wing were solid on three sides, but were glazed above wainscot height on the side facing their respective work rooms. Remodeling has significantly altered the interior finishes. Currently, the ceiling appears to be glued-in-place acoustical tile. The walls look to be painted gypsum wallboard; the bottom half has been treated with a plastic finish hardboard.

Openings. Windows and doors are discussed in part 3.2.7, above.

Decorative Features and Trims. No distinctive decorative features were included in the plans for the interior or exterior of the structure.

Hardware. No notable hardware.

Mechanical Equipment. Building 90 is heated by both central (gas fired) and electric space heaters. Hot water for the lavatories is provided by a gas fired water heater. Lighting and plumbing fixtures have been modernized since the building was originally constructed.

Original Furnishings. None.

IV. SITE

General Setting and Orientation. Building 90 is situated in a mixed land use area at the southernmost edge of the Installation's Northwest District. Building 88 (a storehouse) and Building 99 (vehicle maintenance shop) flank this structure to the northeast and west, respectively. Maritime Street, a main surface transportation artery, is to the east.

Historic Landscaping Design. No plant material exists along the north or west sides of Building 90. Tree and shrub borders along the east and south sides are of a

contemporary period (*Photograph CA-125-G-3*), with the latter acting as a screen from Port of Oakland facilities to the south.

Outbuildings. None.

V. SOURCES

Architectural Drawings. Real Property Records for Building 90 indicate that there were 11 pages of architectural drawings for this structure (#7052-174.0 through 7052-174.10). All but one (#7052-174.9) were located at the OARB Engineering Office. Three drawings have been reproduced and are included as a supplement to this survey.

Early Views. The contractor's "Completion Report" includes a photograph of the completed structure, dated March 13, 1942 (*Photograph CA-125-10*).